

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers

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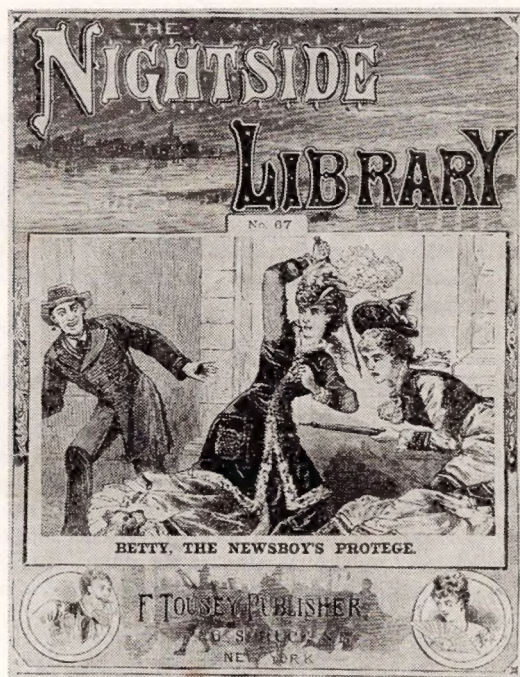
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Stratemeyer and Science Fiction

Part II — The Swifts

By John T. Dizer, Jr.



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Stratemeyer and Science Fiction

Part II — The Swifts

By John T. Dizer, Jr.

Part I of Stratemeyer and Science Fiction showed Stratemeyer's earlier contributions to the juvenile science and adventure field. Popular as these books were at the time, they are largely unknown today. Tom Swift, on the other hand, is still recognized by any red-blooded American youth and indeed has just recently had an electric rifle named after him.

The Tom Swift saga made an indelible imprint on youthful mechanical minds from 1910 on. This author's son was asked in an engineering class at Purdue, not too long ago, where a major source of the world's platinum was. "In Siberia," he answered properly, somewhat to the amazement of the professor and class. He neglected to add that Tom Swift and His Air Glider describes the source in detail. All sorts of useful information are available in both the first series and the Tom Swift Jr. series.

The first series was written from 1910 to 1941 and includes 38 hard cover books and 2 "better little books." The two "better little books" were written by Harriet S. Adams, Stratemeyer's daughter, and are therefore included in the canon.

In 1954 Tom's son, Tom Jr. became active. The series recording his inventions and adventures (and some of his father's) includes 33 books and was published from 1954 to 1971.

To digress briefly, it was not uncommon when a series was particularly successful to continue with another generation. When Frank Merriwell had spent an embarrassing number of years at Yale, Gilbert Patten discovered a brother Dick Merriwell to carry on. Later, about 1915, Frank Merriwell Jr. or "Chip" also went to Fardale Academy, Frank's prep school. To complicate the Merriwell genealogy a modern version of Frank Jr. appeared in the 1960's with Mike Frederic as the author. Logically the series should have been about Frank's grandson.

The Stratemeyer series were similar. The Rovers had seen all and done all in 20 volumes and the last 10 books of the 30 in the series were accounts of their offspring. Again, the chronology is confusing, as it often is in a long series. The Rovers were married and had children old enough to attend prep school at the time of World War I but all three of the older Rovers enlisted in the army and, in spite of their age, saw considerable action.

Tom Swift had a long but tepid romance with Mary Nestor. After 32 books he stopped inventing long enough to marry her in *Tom Swift and His House on Wheels*. The courtship lasted some 19 years, as closely as can be determined. When Victor Appleton II started recording Tom Jr.'s adventures in 1954 Tom was 18 and his father was middle-aged so this chronology is reasonably accurate.

Fortunately it is both possible and necessary to arrest the aging process

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indefinitely in series books. It comes as a shock to realize that Bert and Nan Bobbsey should be 80 (they were 8 in the 1st Bobbsey Twins of 1904) but haven't aged appreciably in the current books.

The Tom Swift canon now contains 73 books. No books have been issued since *Galaxy Ghost*, no. 33 of the Tom Jr. series. The budding romance between Tom and Phyllis Newton should result in another wedding and hopefully the continuation of the line. In a few years we may read of Tom Swift III.

The start was probably 1909. At that time a number of Stratemeyer series were doing well including the Motor Boys, Old Glory Series, Rise in Life Series, Bobbsey Twins, Boys of Business, the Rover Boys and Great Marvel Series to mention just a few. The earlier Motor Boys series was a combination of action, adventure and speed. Starting with bicycles the boys worked their way up to motorcycles, automobiles and flying machines. The theme proved exceedingly popular. The Speedwell Boys and Dave Dashaway, both of a few years later, also used exciting mechanical aids for their adventures. The time seemed ripe for a young inventor series which could combine science and adventure and appeal to the technically-oriented juvenile reader. The Motor Boys was a Stratemeyer series with Howard Garis doing much of the writing. The formula was a good one. Why not continue it with the new series?

George T. Dunlap of Grosset and Dunlap writes, "I well remember the time Stratemeyer came into our office over on West 26th Street with a scheme for publishing a series of boys' books that would have to do with things mechanical, aviation, submarines, marvelous mechanisms of all sorts . . . Out of this idea grew the 'Tom Swift' series, of which, millions have been sold." (1) He stated later that Tom Swift had sold a total of 6,566,646 copies. His autobiography was printed in 1937, close to the end of Tom's printed career. The figure should be fairly accurate since Grosset and Dunlap published all of the books except for the reprints.

Millions of boys have read of the adventures and inventions of Tom Swift and his famous son. Call them science and adventure if you wish, science fiction, at least in the Jules Verne sense, is equally fitting. In the 33 books of Tom Swift Jr. are a space trip to other planets, communication with beings from another world through the use of mathematical symbols, a "jetmarine" which Verne would have envied and an atomic earth blaster. The 40 books which chronicle his father's inventions generally include more mundane inventions—a great search light (prototype of the laser?), an effective airplane engine muffler (which we still need), an improved army tank and a host of others. Tom did also discover life on Mars. Both series were based on an extension of existing scientific knowledge of the day and, as Verne's tour of the Nautilus is now commonplace, so are many of the Swift inventions, so rapidly has our technology changed. If nothing else, the Swift saga shows a fascinating picture of 66 years of American invention from the early airplane to the rocket ship—and beyond.

A point to re-emphasize again is the nature of Edward Stratemeyer's Syndicate. All of Stratemeyer's series belonged exclusively to him and still belong to the Syndicate partners. Until his death the Syndicate series were his creation and contained his characters, his plots and his outlines. He set the tone of the series and the moral level. The writing was done by professionals who were paid the agreed upon price but who had no claim whatsoever on the writings. This policy was continued by his daughters and later by the Syndicate partners. The various writers in recent years who have claimed to have "written" Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, etc., wrote only to Syndicate

specifications following Syndicate procedures.

"It is the purpose of these spirited tales to convey in a realistic way the wonderful advances in land and sea locomotion, and to interest the boy of the present in the hope that he may be a factor in aiding the marvelous development that is coming in the future." This is the somewhat wordy blurb on the old Tom Swift dust jackets. The dust jacket of the first Tom Swift Jr. book, describing the series as "thrilling stories of new inventions in the world of tomorrow," notes that "each scientific detail of this fascinating story has been carefully checked. Tom Swift's inventions may be years ahead of the time, just as his father's were in their time, but they are all plausible and some day you may see them in use."

Mr. Andrew Svenson, late partner in the Syndicate, put it a little differently. "Certainly youngsters interested in science and invention realize that Tom Swift Jr. books are based on scientific fact and probability, whereas the old Toms were in the main adventure stories mixed with pseudo-science." (2)

Tom Swift has a nice ring to it. Stratemeyer borrowed the name from his 1894 serial, "Shorthand Tom the Reporter," which was also published in hard cover in several editions. The name of his friend Ned Newton was quite possibly taken from the 1887 Alger story, "Ned Newton, or, The Fortunes of a New York Bootblack." Bumbling, eccentric Mr. Damon has a lot in common with Garis's Uncle Wiggily and Eradicate Sampson bears a marked resemblance with the later portrayal of Washington White in the Great Marvel Series. The author of Tom Swift was given as "Victor Appleton."

The action takes place in Shopton, in central New York on Lake Carlopa. Tom's father, Barton Swift, is a successful American inventor. He has done well enough to move to Shopton and set up his labs near town. Tom is motherless and Mrs. Braggart is their housekeeper.

Tom started off in a modest way in the first book, riding a bicycle while Andy Foger, the rich bully of the village drove a high-powered automobile. "Bicycles are a back number," growled Andy. This situation couldn't continue and after eccentric Mr. Wakefield Damon tried to ride his motorcycle up a tree he sold it to Tom for \$50. Up to that time Tom's only invention on record was "the egg-beater I was telling you about. But I'm working on some things." He had "planned some useful implements and small machines." (p. 10).

Mary Nestor, who was responsible for perpetuating the Swift dynasty, was introduced on page 22 of the first book when Tom's bicycle frightened her horse, the horse ran away, and Tom had to rescue her. His first love, sad as it may seem, appears to have been his inventions. Mary was a patient soul but Tom was worth waiting for and they were finally married as already noted.

"Tom had graduated with honors from a local academy, and when it came to a question of going further in his studies, he had elected to continue with his father for a tutor, instead of going to college. Mr. Swift was a very learned man...." (p. 54). He had a BS in electrical engineering.

The motor cycle was a challenge to Tom. "...it was not such an easy task as he had hoped to change the transmission. He had finally to appeal to his father, in order to get the right proportion between the back and front gears, for the motorcycle was operated by a sprocket chain...." "Mr. Swift showed Tom had to figure out the number of teeth needed on each sprocket, in order to get an increase of speed,..." (p. 55). Fortunately Tom was a fast learner and his later inventions showed a marked improvement in engineering ability.

During 1910 five books appeared. Tom followed up his motorcycle with a motorboat. In both these books he re-built an existing mechanism, improved on it somewhat but created nothing radically new. The technical approach of the first Tom Swifts seemed reasonable to the juvenile audience. They could do the same things with an engine and some probably had. The adventures were exciting and the love interest was innocuous. The kids bought Tom Swifts like wildfire. Volumes 3 and 4 introduced an airship and submarine boat but throughout the entire series the technical explanations were reasonable and comprehensible to a boy. Even after Tom shortly passed the technical level of his readers he wasn't too far ahead. Under the right circumstances they could have done the same. And always they could identify with Tom and share in his exploits. This was a major key in the success, not just of this series, but of most of Stratemeyer's productions. He probably knew the juvenile mind, its interests, aspirations and dreams, better than any writer of his time. This "empathy" is still very much a feature of the Stratemeyer Syndicate.

Tom's airship, the "Red Cloud," was designed by John Sharp the Aero-naut and built by him and the Swifts. It was a combination dirigible-airplane as were several of the early Swift machines. The submarine "Advance" was an advance even on current technology. The negative and positive plates which propelled it were probably superior to our atomic propulsion systems. These plates were invented, not by Tom, but by his father, Barton Swift. In the "Advance" the Swifts salvaged \$300,000 from a sunken ship, the Boldero, at a depth of 2½ miles and could have worked at depths of 3 miles.

Volume 5 introduced an electric runabout which Tom used to win the big race down on Long Island and also to bring urgently needed cash to save an ailing bank. Back in the '30s when I first read this book it seemed quite dated. Nowadays it appears that Tom was just further ahead of the times than we realized. It is true he would have trouble today finding trolley lines to recharge his batteries as he did at one time, but his battery design seems to be as good as anything in the field today. It used lithium and potassium hydrate as an electrolyte. This seems to be the first major invention exclusively by Tom, and the new feature was the battery, not the car.

The next volumes contained more adventures than inventions. Tom perfected an airplane for an acquaintance of his father since "inventors should be mutually helpful." This airplane was also a combined dirigible-airplane since Victor Appleton seemed to be partial to that design. In it they took a trip to Earthquake Island which ended in near disaster. Only at the last possible moment was the party saved.

When Tom went looking for the **Diamond Makers** he threw his inventing to the winds and spent the entire book adventuring. After a routine trip to the Rockies in the "Red Cloud" marked only by finding a stowaway they discovered the mountain and cave where the diamonds were made. An electric storm destroyed the cave and mountain and almost destroyed our friends but they escaped with a double handful of diamond. When they returned to Shopton Tom and his friends tried to make diamonds using an electric current instead of lightning but were unsuccessful.

The hiatus in Tom's inventing continued in **Caves of Ice** although the electric rifle made its first appearance in this book. In fact the major invention was a tri-plane built by the thorough rascal, Andy Foger, and he personally did little or no inventing himself, hiring most of the construction. The Swift expedition to Alaska shipped the "Red Cloud" to Seattle where it was reassembled. The Fogers, who were after the same gold as the Swifts,

shipped their plane to Sitka. From then on it was nip and tuck between the rivals until the Fogers broke two of the wings of their plane, the "Anthony."

Tom's radically new electric rifle was introduced at a very trying time in *Caves of Ice*. As the adventurers were being charged by musk oxen Tom appeared with a peculiar-looking gun. "It's my new electric rifle....I don't know how it will work, as it isn't entirely finished, but I'm going to try it." (p. 163). It worked fine, much to the detriment of the musk oxen. Somehow Tom had "put some finishing touches on it since undertaking the voyage to the Caves of Ice." He kept busy. But the electric rifle was quite incidental to the adventures in the search for the gold fields. The outcome included the demise of the "Red Cloud," the accumulation of considerable gold by the Swift party and additional unpleasant experiences by the Fogers.

Tom's inventive genius came to the fore in volume 9, *Sky Racer*, published in 1911. Heretofore, as far as we can tell, he had been a collaborator with John Sharp or his father. However, "Is this Tom Swift, the inventor of several airships" asked James Gunmore, secretary of the Eagle Park Aviation Association at the beginning of *Sky Racer*. (p. 1). Apparently Tom had been doing some inventing unrecorded by Mr. Appleton. Tom mentions a small monoplane, the "Butterfly," which he has built. He agrees to build a plane for the Eagle Park contest if his father will help him. Barton is working on a wireless motor and is still the inventive genius of the family until he is taken seriously ill. Even Tom's *Sky Racer* had an engine "modeled after one his father had recently patented." (p. 26). The plans for the airplane were entirely Tom's and, while his father discussed the plans with Tom, he made few significant suggestions. Needless to say Tom finished the plane well within the two months allowed, won the race with an astounding speed of 130 miles an hour and carried home the \$10,000 prize.

Although Tom's plane, the "Humming-Bird," was his original design it is still interesting to note that "it was to be a cross between the Bleriot and the Antionette, with the general features of both, but with many changes or improvements." (p. 45). It also included "a new principle....not yet patented." (p. 34). It can be seen that Tom, while rapidly advancing in his engineering ability was still leaning heavily on earlier developments. However the airplane was most successful and "with the money received from winning the big race, and from his contracts from the Government, Tom Swift was now in a fair way to become quite wealthy." (p. 207).

The number of really new and original inventions which were entirely the product of Tom's imagination is limited. He had an unusual ability to take an existing mechanism or device and improve on it. He was able to develop special materials to resist extreme pressures and temperatures, special gases to produce more lift than hydrogen and so to improve on existing creations. He improved on the existing aeroplanes, air gliders, moving picture camera, fire extinguishers, dirigibles, war tanks, oil drilling equipment and house trailers. The majority of the 40 books are stories of such improvements. However there are several original creations which apparently came almost entirely from Tom's genius. The first was the Electric Rifle and the list certainly includes his Photo Telescope, his Great Searchlight, his Sky Train, his Television Detector, his Planet Stone, Giant Telescope and Magnetic Silencer.

The electric rifle had its baptism under fire in the musk-oxen incident. Tom later improved it so that "I can calculate exactly, by means of an automatic arrangement, just how far the charge of electricity will go. It stops short just at the limit of the range, and is not effective beyond that." (Elec-

tric Rifle, p. 18). This feature has never been duplicated. It had the slight disadvantage that the range had to be set and a mistake could cause problems as Tom found when he accidentally shot the town skinflint. The range had been set for 2000 feet instead of 200. The skinflint was annoyed but not hurt and Tom bought him off for \$12.

Tom was quite detailed in his description of the gun. "There was no sound, no smoke, no flame and not the slightest jar," with the rifle. (p. 19). "Strictly speaking, it is a concentrated discharge of wireless electricity, directed against a certain object. You can't see it any more than you can see a lightning bolt, though that is sometimes visible as a ball of fire. My electric rifle bullets are similar to a discharge of lightning, except that they are invisible." (p. 34).

In Tom's trip to Africa with their new plane the "Black Hawk" he used the electric rifle to real advantage. In short order he disposed of a whale (p. 81), sharks (p.84), wild buffalo (pp. 93, 140), 2 pythons (pp. 98-99), numerous elephants (pp. 118, 124, 136), a lion (p. 129), 2 rhinoceroses (p. 149), some birds (p. 155), numerous red pygmies (p. 166), and also hostile natives, "black, half-naked forms," (p. 207). We should note he disabled the pygmies and natives and did not kill any of them.

Tom's African safari was most successful including rescuing a brace of missionaries, the Foger party and securing a large number of elephant tusks from unwilling elephants. "A division was made of the ivory, and Tom's share was large enough to provide him with a substantial amount."

When Tom rescued Andy Foger and his party in the wilds of Africa he partially ruined a perfectly good villain in so doing. Andy told Tom, "...but first, Tom I want to ask your forgiveness for all I've done to you, and to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for saving us." (p. 197). One would think he could never be the same after a speech like that, but he didn't really change too much.

Tom's *Great Search Light* (1912) might seem at first glance more like a moderate improvement on an existing device rather than a futuristic invention. It is probably both. The evidence shows that the light was an accidental discovery caused when Koku accidentally crossed two wires. Tom was trying to catch a chicken thief when Koku had his mishap.

"Look, father?" he cried. "The alternating current from the automatic dynamo has become crossed with direct current from the big storage battery in a funny way." "...it has given a current of peculiar strength and intensity—a current that would seem to be made especially for searchlights. Dad, I'm on the edge of a big discovery.'" (p. 70).

As Tom thought out the problem he added, "with larger carbons, better parabolic mirrors, a different resistance box, better connections, and a more powerful primary current there is no reason why I could not get a light that would make objects more plainly visible than in the daytime, even in the darkest night, and at a great distance." (p. 72).

It was noted that the light had a range of several miles but, since it was portable, it had much less candlepower than an existing lighthouse light of 95,000,000 candle power which could be seen 50 miles. Nevertheless it seems to have been a major discovery and well may have been the prototype of the laser.

With the light and his noiseless plane, incidently still a combination aero-plane-dirigible, Tom tracked down smugglers from Canada. He also rescued from a watery grave on Lake Ontario the same missionaries he had saved in Africa. Tom's preventive maintenance was obviously lacking as he admitted

when his gas pressure went to 775 psi and almost blew up the plane. Finally on a night cruise after the smugglers, Tom caught one in the searchlight beam and then shot it down with electric rifle. The smugglers included both Fogers since the elder Foger had lost most of his money. Andy's reformation had been quite temporary. The searchlight makes appearances in later books in both old and new series and is a classic example of the Swift genius for discovering and applying new technical principles.

"What do I care for principles of science?" cried Tom,...." Tom and his father were arguing about the possibilities of "sending light waves—one of the most delicate forms of motion in the world—over a material wire." The time was 1914. The book was **Photo Telephone**. Tom was convinced he could transmit both light waves and electrical waves on the same conductor and so have a visual picture of the telephone caller. It was a radical thought for the time. Scientists said it was impossible. Tom had many failures. He selected selenium in several forms to coat the plates. He tried "an alternating current on the third wire," to see if that would make it any better. Nothing worked. Eradicate Sampson was the actual inventor of the successful photo telephone, quite by accident. He was attempting to scare Koku, so he connected the photo telephone and its amplifier. Then he plugged in by mistake the wire to the arc light circuit which carried over a thousand volts. He got thoroughly shocked in the process but Koku's image appeared on the selenium plate so it was worth it. As Tom put it, "I understand it now, Rad; but you did more than I've been able to do. I never, in a hundred years, would have thought of switching on that current." (p. 123). As Koku found the principle of the great searchlight by accident, so did Rad discover the missing element in the photo telephone.

With a good deal of improvement on "Eradicate's Angel Gabriel system," as Tom called it, the photo telephone became a practical development. He made several interesting variations on the basic theme. He arranged it so that a picture could be taken of a caller without his knowledge. He arranged it also so the plate was like a mirror so "he can see his friend as well as talk to him." (p. 131). The question of violation of privacy was not considered in Tom's inventions. He even added a dictaphone to record the messages. Mr. Damon was kidnapped by scoundrels after they had bilked him of his fortune. Tom was able to bug the telephone booth the villain used to talk to Mrs. Damon about additional loot. Tom recorded the villain's voice, also took a picture of him and got him dead to rights. It turned out to be Peters, the unscrupulous promoter who had swindled Mr. Damon. After getting a warrant on the basis of the photo telephone picture Tom went after Peters and eventually captured him. Peters was convicted on the basis of Tom's recorded messages and the photograph from the Photo Telephone. Mr. Damon got most of his fortune back.

Tom's **Airline Express** is an example of an idea which never really got off the ground. It is neither science fiction or even good engineering. The idea has superficial merit. In 1926 the idea of transcontinental air travel was quite visionary and Tom was hard-pressed to raise the cash to finance the trials of his "combination aeroplane and railroad coach." His idea was to have three planes but only one railroad coach. The coach was clamped to the plane in New York and flown to Chicago. "Landing on the Chicago field, the autocar will be detached and rolled, under its own power, to the second aeroplane which will be in waiting." (p. 115). Then on to Denver and a new plane and finally to San Francisco, all in one day of about 16 hours.

"Figure five hours to a lap, that would mean a flying rate of two hun-

dred miles an hour—not at all impossible. We'll charge a fare of one thousand dollars each way." (p. 116).

Tom made the flight in 15 hours and 46 minutes to win the financing he needed and all was well. This was not one of his greatest inventions, however.

Sky Train (1931) is a little different. This invention was both imaginative and practical. The opinion has been expressed that this concept was used in the glider landings of World War II. As a commercial venture it never really proved itself and Tom did not make too much use of it, at least according to later writings. It does appear in **Planet Stone** where Tom towed his private lab car "Metalanthium" to South America in his search for the mystery of the meteorites. Briefly, the technique was this: A powerful airplane towed two or more gliders behind it in the manner of an aerial freight train. The unusual characteristics were that the plane could unhitch and hitch up to the gliders in midair. Not only that, but the gliders in a later improvement contained a gas, lighter than hydrogen, which supported them so they could not crash. In the later books Tom was often over-extended financially. This was true in **Sky Train** but all turned out well, Tom won a \$25,000 prize and "the sale of the world rights was put at a sum sufficient to clear off all the Swift plant debts and leave a big margin." (p. 215).

Television Detector was written in 1933, presumably by Mrs. Adams. It contains more elements of science fiction than many of the series. Both Tom's photo-telephone and his talking pictures embodied features of television but this invention was much more advanced.

It all started when Tom's formula for a deadly gas was stolen. (It was not his invention—he had bought it from a foreigner.) Tom had found the gas useful to kill rats but it had other undesirable possibilities and he was anxious to recover the formula. To do so he invented a television detector. This television detector had a number of radical new ideas. It embodied "a double anode, high vacuum, cathode ray oscillograph tube...." among other things. (p. 54). In 1933 even Tom hadn't invented solid state components. He had to "generate not only the power by which I see but also the power that will enter the building and transmit the images." (p. 56). A worthy task, even for Tom. With this invention he expected to catch the thief of the gas formula. Along with the TD Detector Tom invented a "walkie talkie" which was a portable sending and receiving radio to transmit by means of the Morse code. Ned had hoped Tom could make it work by voice "but that was a little too much to expect." (p. 68). Tom finally made a major break-through on his detector when he solved the problem of concentrating the television beam and decreasing the size of the phosphorescent spot where the electrons struck the end of the glass cathode tube. And it worked.

"When I point this gadget....at a brick wall, or at a wooden or stone one for that matter, the rays in my machine penetrate through the barriers, bombard the objects beyond with electrons, flash back to me and show themselves on a screen." (p. 95). The device would penetrate for several miles through brick and wooden walls. It had to be focused but this was no problem. Tom even added a radium tube which would "shoot out any distance and will illuminate the persons I want to see without their knowing it. Then I can see them in the dark." (pp. 99-100).

The upshot of this futuristic invention was that Tom located a missing anarchist for whom the secret service was urgently looking and also located the black leopard gang who had stolen his deadly gas formula. The invention

of a device which would see through walls of all types and permit the viewer to examine all activities within the range of the instrument has some obvious implications. Even though the United States Secret Service was delighted with the results they should have raised some objections to the legal and moral aspects of this invention. Even Tom was not properly disturbed, probably since he was using the invention in the service of his country. Watergate could have made much use of it with a minimum of problems. This is one invention of Tom's which has not been duplicated and which should not be, even in our current "Big Brother" atmosphere.

A late adventure in the original series involved life from outer space and a miraculous health lamp, as well as a return to Giant-Land. In **Planet Stone or Discovering the Secret of Another World** (1935) Tom had been designing a metalanthium health lamp which was only partly successful. Meanwhile a letter to Koku, Tom's devoted giant, informed him that the king of giant land had died, and Koku and his brother were next in line for the throne. Ned Newton, Mr. Damon and Tom organized an expedition to return Koku to South America. The trip had to be postponed while Koku recovered from an accidental over-dose of Tom's "XYZ" mixture. There seemed to be malpractice problems even then since Tom gave the injection which saved Koku's life, and "Dr. Bane," current villain of this book, did his best to have Tom arrested for practicing medicine without a license. Since Koku recovered, the incident blew over.

The trip to Giant Land by "Sky Train" was relatively uneventful. The craft weathered a routine fierce storm and landed safely in the midst of an anti-social tribe of savages. Mr. Damon, who was the proud possessor of a wig, inadvertently used this fact to impress the Wabawaba tribe. Anybody who could scalp himself and then replace his scalp was too much for them and they were properly impressed and also subdued. The wig played a prominent part in the success of the expedition. The party found a meteorite which Tom blew to pieces for scientific investigation and work proceeded satisfactorily, interrupted by the need to kill a jaguar and a python with the electric rifle. The "Sky stone" proved to be a dud but fortunately a severe thunderstorm brought another meteorite. After some strenuous activity in which Mr. Damon had to subdue the natives with his "usual wig medicine business..." the giants dup up the 2nd meteorite and hauled it to Pabalo, the main village. Tom blew the 2nd meteorite into pieces. His scientific methods remind us somewhat of Heinrich Schliemann.

Tom was excited. "We're on the verge of something big and important. Here is an inanimate object from another world than our own—a sky-stone as the natives call it—and it glows with a strange light. Ned, maybe I can prove life on another planet!" (p. 140).

The stone contained "a strange iridescent powder and an inner asbestos core which was like a nut." The nut, in turn, contained 6 small seeds. One thing led to another and Tom and his friends aided the giants in a campaign against the Wabawaba and the nefarious Dr. Bane. Amo, Koku's younger brother, finally settled the conflict by killing three of the enemy in single combat and earned the right to be king since his brothers had abdicated.

After numerous discouragements Tom finally grew two plants from the meteorite seeds (One of which Mr. Damon had found in his wig.) The "flowers bloomed and expanded into beautiful white blossoms with a blood-red centre." (p. 192). The flowers were ground to a white powder and in conjunction with the metalanthium light "never failed to restore health to the afflicted subjects." (p. 197).

Swattem Goth, baseball hero of all America was stricken with a baffling disease and saved by Tom and his new discoveries. "...A solution of the crushed seeds, strangely glowing, was forced between the blue lips. An injection was also hypodermically administered." (p. 200). Tom presumably let a licensed physician make the injection. Mr. Goth lived and Tom was a hero. Dr. Bane, himself, was later arrested for practicing medicine without a license.

The planet from which the meteorite came is still unknown. "Where that world is remains yet to be discovered. But Tom Swift has proved that plant life exists on it—life that came to him most marvelously in a meteorite." (pp. 201-202).

The meteorite formed part of another scientific breakthrough in 1939 in **Tom Swift and his Giant Telescope**, a Whitman Better Little Book. This was roughly the time when Corning Glass was casting the mirror for the Mount Palomar telescope and there was considerable interest as to what their telescope would show. Tom's telescope was set up in the Adirondacks but the magnifying properties were supplied by "the wonderful green substance from the Planet Stone." It developed that much of the planet stone was still imbedded in giant land in South America but through the help of Tom's giant friends it was removed and shipped to the United States. On the way it was jettisoned during a storm and Tom had to assist in recovering it from the ocean depths. In the process he used his electric rifle to shoot a big fish which was holding two divers on the ocean bottom. The electric rifle probably holds the worlds record for variety of types of game shot. Tom had also been spending his spare moments in inventing a bendable glass which was flexible but hard as glass. It was also fortunate since Tom had a habit of spending the company money rather profligately when involved in a new project.

The telescope was set up and far outshone anything Palomar could produce.

"Before his eyes were revealed a great city, nearly seventy-five million miles distant! Peculiar people surged along the avenues, weird aircraft thronged the upper atmosphere, and gigantic buildings and palaces dotted the place. All on far-distant Mars!" (pp. 423-424).

"Into the eyes of Barton Swift came tears as he said:

"Tom, my son, you have performed the greatest miracle of the Age!" (p. 424). Who are we to question it. The only surprising thing is that no Swift expedition, as far as is recorded, ever visited this great city of Mars. This may be a project for Tom Swift III.

Tom's last chronicled invention in the original series was **Magnetic Silencer** also published as a "Better Little Book" by Whitman in 1941. Purists sometimes question why either **Giant Telescope** or **Magnetic Silencer** are included in the canon. The answer lies in the fact that both books feature Tom Swift and his friends but more importantly that both were products of the Stratemeyer Syndicate. Mrs. Adams has informed me that she personally wrote all of the Tom Swifts after her father's death, including the "Better Little Books." (3) At any rate **Magnetic Silencer** has one most interesting reference. "Tom Swift had been gone for hours to test his latest experiment with a secret bomb." (p. 12). Whether this is an actual reference to the atomic bomb is not clear but it was probably not beyond Tom's capabilities at this period. The book refers to the bomb as being a "controlled bomb-planter for use by farmers in distributing seed or insect killer but this may be camouflage. When Ned Newton suggested military uses for the bomb

Tom replied, 'Scientific developments have already been misused too often by war-crazy men! They'll never kill men with my ideas!' (p. 78). However, he admitted he was giving the war department full details of the invention. He seems to have forgotten that a good part of his fortune was founded on his sales to the government of such devices as his war tank, air scout and aerial warship. Another thing he seems to have forgotten is that back in 1912 he invented an airplane silencer which seemed most effective. "...save for a soft whirr, such as would be made by the wings of a bird, there was absolutely no sound." (*Great Searchlight*, p. 36). However, apparently this wasn't good enough so Tom started over.

The main plot of *Magnetic Silencer* concerned a new magnetic ore which had an attraction for sound waves. It "attracts and absorbs the whir of the propellor as well as the roar of the engine." (p. 180). After many trials Tom was able to adapt the material for his uses and developed a most advanced silencer.

"To the critical examining board he showed that even the most sensitive audio locator could not pick up a sound from a plane equipped with his device, even when flying comparatively low." (pp. 423-424).

"'You have made a very great contribution to your country's defense, Mr. Swift,' declared Colonel Brooks, after formally accepting the use of the magnetic silencer on behalf of the United States." (p. 424).

Tom had now appeared in forty books. (The books and publishing dates are listed at the end of the chapter.) His active career as an inventor had covered thirty years. He was a wealthy man from his inventions and adventures. Unlike Verne, his capacity for invention did not appreciably diminish as he grew older. His son, however, as will be shown later, far surpassed him in the scope of his creations.

Tom certainly does not fall under the usual umbrella of "science fiction" in the modern sense. Ignoring the tendency both to pedantry and sophistry in modern critical writing about science fiction compare Verne and Swift. As previously noted, the writings of both authors were extensions of existing scientific knowledge. Verne developed a submarine which anticipated modern techniques. So did Tom. Verne developed a flying machine which was 50 years ahead of actual developments. Some of Tom's developments have still not been matched. Verne's books on the Barsac Mission combine adventure in Africa with science. Many of Tom's chronicles are both adventure and science. In this type of comparison there is really little difference. The big differences, as I see them, are these: Verne was a scientific prophet who attempted to base his books on a sound scientific foundation. His books were seriously presented and generally seriously accepted. The Tom Swifts were written for a juvenile audience. The scientific foundation is much more superficial. As is common in this genre, the books were automatically regarded as entertainment for children and so unworthy of comparison with Verne.

It is quite true that Tom Swift is very good entertainment but he is much more. Without the moralizing of an earlier generation, the books show how a boy from a modest background can, through his use of scientific knowledge improve the lot of the world and provide a good income for himself. Tom is as much a reflection of the "American Dream" as the heroes of Ellis, Castlemon and Alger. He combines the adventures of the wild west myth, the drive, aggressiveness and moral code of the American boy hero and the concepts of modern applied science and engineering. It is quite true that Tom was generally hazy as to HOW his inventions worked. It is equally true that Stratemeyer and his writers showed an uncanny prophetic sense.

Any comparison of Verne's inventions and Tom's will bear this out. Verne was more specific as to the "how" of his inventions but no more accurate in his prophesies.

The entire Tom Swift series bears the stamp of Edward Stratemeyer and his attitude towards science and invention. When he died in 1930, 33 of the series had been published. The remaining seven followed the same strain in general. A case can be made that the last seven by Mrs. Adams have more pure science fiction than the earlier volumes. Millions of American boys read the Tom Swifts not for their implicit moral tone or from a conscious desire to learn more about science but for fun. The adventure was there. So was the science. The engineering marvels of the next decades were presented for their delight and they loved them. Were these marvels good prophesy? No one knew—or cared very much. Could they follow in Tom's footsteps? You bet. They could and very often did. Consciously or unconsciously Tom's readers absorbed his beliefs. He reflected American attitudes towards technical creativity but he also created these attitudes. Ask your older engineers and scientists how many of them read Tom Swift as a boy. Many, many did.

Tom either rested on his laurels for a number of years or Victor Appleton was gagged by the well-known penchant for secrecy in Washington bureaucratic circles. At any rate nothing further appeared concerning Swift inventions until 1954. Tom Swift Jr. was now 18 and had reached the age where his successes equalled or surpassed those of his father. Victor Appleton II, nephew of the original Victor Appleton was the new writer, or so the advertisements said. In fact, of course, the productions were primarily the joint efforts of Mrs. Adams and Andrew Svensen, Stratemeyer Syndicate partners, with the writing done by some six different writers over the life of the series. Thirty-three books were published, the last in 1971. Many volumes are still available in book stores. A complete listing of titles appears at the end of the chapter.

The Tom Swift Jr. books have a different flavor from the original series. The thought may be that today's youth are more precocious, more worldly and more advanced. Therefore the books should also be more worldly and advanced so as to attract the young reader. The result doesn't quite come off. My unproven belief is that the more a child can identify with a situation the more believable it becomes to him and the more he becomes personally involved with the life of the hero. When a book adds stress situations where the hero overcomes the opposition—but only after a major and sometimes desperate effort—along with vivid but relatively realistic action, the child's involvement becomes even more complete. The hero succeeds. The child reader can also succeed. In all the books issued by Stratemeyer and the Syndicate we find this theme. We also find hard work encouraged and rewarded. We find honesty, clean living and the American virtues encouraged and rewarded.

"'You Swifts have a reputation for scrupulous honesty,'" sneered the Brungarian villain in *The Visitor from Planet X* (p. 121). In the same book Tom Sr. also reminded his son, "'Don't forget, Tom, the mind of a human being or any thinking inhabitant of our universe is based on a divine soul. No scientist must ever delude himself into thinking he can copy the work of our Creator.'" (p. 143).

This wholesome attitude—and I believe this firmly—has been a major factor in American juvenile training for about 85 years. This, I think, is why Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys and the Bobbsey Twins are still so beloved. Now Tom Jr. is all of this also—except he is too competent, too able and too

remote from juvenile reality. I like the series. It reads well. There is action and plenty of it. The inventions are thoroughly researched and there are certainly enough of them. Years ago when I first visited the Stratemeyer Syndicate I noted with awe the number of technical journals on the desk of "Victor Appleton II." The number of inventions—and I am a professional engineer—is, I suppose, the crux of the problem. Just a glance at the major inventions listed in the 33 books would convince any 10 year old that no one, not even Tom Swift Jr., could be that good.

There would be no useful purpose in analyzing all the inventions from Tom's fertile brain. They ran from his first major invention, a Flying Lab, to his last recorded invention, "an ingenious device which can atomize objects, send them great distances and reassemble the atoms." With this "transmittaton" Tom prevented "a catastrophic invasion of earth by ghosts from another galaxy." (*Galaxy Ghosts*, preface). In between he became the first astronaut to land on the moon, developed an Outpost in Space, solved the riddle of the UFO's and saved the earth from a deadly comet. He outwitted the Asteroid Pirates and built a two man submarine as a "speed craft for safe sea travel." He was aided by some special Swift inventions, in particular Tomasite, "a strong, durable plastic named after the young inventor and his father. Heat resistant, it absorbed gamma rays much more efficiently than lead shields which are ordinarily used." (*Jetmarine*, p. 9). It also reflected sound waves.

There is a strong undercurrent of both ancient lost civilizations and visitors from outer space in the series. On the first page of the first volume a meteorite from an unknown planet landed on the Swift grounds. It was "mechanically made and only beings of high intelligence could have worked out those mathematical symbols," carved on the side of the black cigar-shaped device. (*Flying Lab*, p. 3). These symbols were eventually deciphered and Tom's space friends played a major part in the series.

At the end of the first book it was announced that Tom and his Dad had deciphered the strange meteorite symbols as being from Mars, from a group of scientists who couldn't determine how to penetrate the Earth's atmosphere. This group helped Tom at several crucial times with vital information. They warned him of the ghosts from Andromeda who were invading our solar system, but it was Tom who convinced the ghosts not to invade earth. On another occasion the "creatures from outer space" moved a small asteroid into orbit around the earth and sent strange samples of sick animal life for Tom to cure. He did. They even sent a "Visitor from Planet X" to gather impressions and data from earth.

In Tom's diving seacopter Tom discovered a sunken city, apparently built largely of gold (*Spectromarine Selector*, p. 2). The ruins were probably the famous lost city of Atlantis.

Tom found space symbols carved on Mayan ruins telling how a spaceship had crashed, and also found similar symbols on the "Aurum pyramids" in the underwater city of gold. He discovered a neo-aurium mine used by the original inhabitants. And to top it off the expedition found an ancient but advanced spaceship "half buried in the ocean slime..." near the city of gold. (*Spectromarine Selector*, p. 183).

As a general background, at the beginning of the new series the Swift establishment had grown to several enormous enterprises. They included the experimental station Swift Enterprises, which covered 4 square miles, the Atlantic outpost on Fearing Island and the Swift Construction Co. headed by Ned Newton as well as an atomic energy plant in the west. Tom and Mary

Nestor were still happily married with two children, Tom Jr., aged 18, and his sister Sandra, a year younger. Wakefield Damon and Barton Swift had passed on as had Eradicate Sampson and Boomerang. Shopton was still headquarters for the Swifts but it seems to have been moved closer to the East Coast. This may have just been an impression due to the faster speeds of the new inventions.

Atomic energy was routine to Tom Jr. His first major invention, the Flying Lab was atomic powered. This airplane, the "Sky Queen," had atomic engines and jet lifters and the "Tomasite" to shield the nuclear reactors. It carried two baby aircraft, "a small jet plane we call the Kangaroo Kub and jet-lifted helicopter, the Skeeter." Included in the plane was a chemistry lab, a physics lab and even a lab for animal husbandry. One of Tom's first uses of the lab was in conjunction with his "Damonscope," a revolutionary instrument for locating uranium, with which he uncovered a vast uranium deposit in South America. The lab which was used in many books of the series, almost always entirely successfully. Its speed of 1200 miles per hour or more, made it most useful.

Tom did everything. He made a great atomic earth blaster to drill for iron at the South Pole. He made an ultrasonic cycloplane, a deep-sea hydro-dome, a spectromarine selector, an electronic hydrolung, a megascope space prober, and an aquatomic tracker in addition to his flying lab and jetmarine. These are only a sample.

His "Sea Hound" was a "combination submarine-whirly-bird—an atomic powered ship able to fly, hover, or speed through the ocean depths." (*Cosmic Astronauts*, p. 4).

"Later expeditions had taken him not only into outer space but also to the far corners of the globe, including the South Pole, Africa, and the Yucatan jungles of Mexico." (p. 13).

He even invented a plane which was part jet plane and part dirigible. It was called a "paraplane." Things had gone full circle from Tom Sr. Shades of the old "Red Cloud"!

The Swift philosophy was this, quoting from Tom Sr.: "A true scientist will always find a way to work with whatever tools come to hand." (*Cosmic Astronauts*, p. 177). While this is a good engineering philosophy it had probably also been developed because of the many villainous tricks perpetrated by the many enemies of the Swifts. As a side issue in many of the books, Tom had to compete with brilliant but distorted and utterly unscrupulous Brun-garians, etc., scientists who made the Fogers, Tom Senior's old enemies look like pikers.

There is no question in my mind but what Tom Swift Jr. fits any general definition of science fiction. The criticisms from purists, I suppose, would be that technical problems are solved too conveniently by dubious scientific techniques. I may be true but, I submit, it is not important. In fact I find it difficult to support any contention that science fiction must always show a carefully supported scientific basis of fact. If there is scientific fiction there is imagination and without imagination there is no science fiction.

A point of concern to some is whether the Swifts were Scientists, Engineers or Technicians. I lean to the Engineering label. It is noteworthy that the Swift inventions were practical examples based on natural laws. They filled a useful need. Although they apparently discovered a covey of new scientific principles their interest and purpose was practical application. And this most nearly fits the definition of engineering.

Although the emphasis of this chapter has been on Tom Swift Sr. and

Jr. there are other science-fiction series to consider. A most interesting example is the "Rocket Rider" series by Howard R. Garis, published in 1933 and 1934 by A. L. Burt Co.

Although other series under Garis's own name were marketed by the Stratemeyer Syndicate it is doubtful if this one was. It is interesting because it shows, independently of the Stratemeyer influence, Garis's own interest in science and adventure. It is common knowledge that Garis was actively involved with the Tom Swift series until Stratemeyer's death. How much of the plots and the marvelous inventions was actually the work of Garis or of Stratemeyer himself is not clear. Both men were interested in the field of science. The Tom Swift books were Stratemeyer's own property and certainly reflected his interests.

The Wynn and Lonny racing books by "Eric Speed" are current offerings of the Stratemeyer Syndicate. The last one of which I have knowledge, **Road Race of Champions**, was published in 1975. These books, though, follow more the theme of the old Speedwell Boys and Dave Dashaway series with lots of action and things mechanical but little in the science and invention field.

It is too early to tell about the influence of the Tom Swift Jr. series. My younger friends give the impression that they like young Tom but do not identify with him as we did with his father. These books are obviously books of prophesy. They are better researched than the first series and are generally realistic prophesies of what to expect in the applied science world. Indeed, some of the early prophesies have already come true. In this day of giant corporate research it is more difficult to believe in and identify with, the 18 year old boy hero who, without formal scientific training, can create these miracles. We can believe in the miracles but not in the ability of one youth, no matter how gifted, to create them. The logistical support of all the Swift companies as well as the help of his famous father still do not bridge the credibility gap. The books are fun to read, contain much technical information and may be equally successful in creating an interest in science and invention.

These two chapters have traced Edward Stratemeyer's interest in applied science and invention as it is reflected in his books. It is a long history, interwoven with changes in American attitudes, customs and beliefs. I believe the evidence shows that Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate have made a major contribution in the field. Literally hundreds of examples from 1890 to date can be cited. Probably no single man did more to reinforce juvenile attitudes towards technical achievement and success. Whether we like it or not, whether we call it science fiction or science and adventure we should recognize the tremendous legacy of Edward Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate.

| Title | Date |
|--|------|
| 1. Tom Swift and His Motor Cycle, or, Fun and Adventure on the Road; | 1910 |
| 2. Tom Swift and His Motor Boat, or, The Rivals of Lake Carlopa; | 1910 |
| 3. Tom Swift and His Airship, or, The Stirring Cruise of the Red Cloud; | 1910 |
| 4. Tom Swift and His Submarine Boat, or, Under the Ocean for Sunken Treasure; | 1910 |
| 5. Tom Swift and His Electric Runabout, or, The Speediest Car on the Road; | 1910 |
| 6. Tom Swift and His Wireless Message, or, The Castaways of Earthquake Island; | 1911 |
| 7. Tom Swift Among the Diamond Makers, or, The Secret Phantom Mountain; | 1911 |

8. Tom Swift in the Caves of Ice, or, The Wreck of the Airship; 1911
9. Tom Swift and His Sky Racer, or, The Quickest Flight on Record; 1911
10. Tom Swift and His Electric Rifle, or, Daring Adventures in Elephant Land; 1911
11. Tom Swift in the City of Gold, or, Marvelous Adventures Underground; 1912
12. Tom Swift and His Air Glider, or, Seeking the Platinum Treasure; 1912
13. Tom Swift in Captivity, or, A Daring Escape by Airship; 1912
14. Tom Swift and His Wizard Camera, or, The Perils of Moving Picture Taking; 1912
15. Tom Swift and His Great Searchlight, or, On the Border for Uncle Sam; 1912
16. Tom Swift and His Giant Cannon, or, The Longest Shots on Record; 1913
17. Tom Swift and His Photo Telephone, or, The Picture That Saved a Fortune; 1914
18. Tom Swift and His Aerial Warship, or, The Naval Terror of the Seas; 1915
19. Tom Swift and His Big Tunnel, or, The Hidden City of the Andes; 1916
20. Tom Swift in the Land of Wonders, or, The Search for the Idol of Gold; 1917
21. Tom Swift and His War Tank, or, Doing His Best for Uncle Sam; 1918
22. Tom Swift and His Air Scout, or, Uncle Sam's Mastery of the Sky; 1919
23. Tom Swift and His Undersea Search, or, The Treasure on the Floor of the Atlantic; 1920
24. Tom Swift Among the Fire Fighters, or, Battling With Flames From the Air; 1921
25. Tom Swift and His Electric Locomotive, or, Two Miles a Minute on the Rails; 1922
26. Tom Swift and His Flying Boat, or, The Castaways of the Giant Iceberg; 1923
27. Tom Swift and His Great Oil Gusher, or, The Treasure of Goby Farm; 1924
28. Tom Swift and His Chest of Secrets, or, Tracing the Stolen Inventions; 1925
29. Tom Swift and His Airline Express, or, From Ocean to Ocean by Daylight; 1926
30. Tom Swift Circling the Globe, or, The Daring Cruise of the Air Monarch; 1927
31. Tom Swift and His Talking pictures, or, The Greatest Invention on Record; 1928
32. Tom Swift and His House on Wheels, or, A Trip to the Mountain of Mystery; 1929
33. Tom Swift and His Big Dirigible, or, Adventures Over the Forest of Fire; 1930
34. Tom Swift and His Sky Train, or, Overland Through the Clouds; 1931
35. Tom Swift and His Giant Magnet, or, Bringing Up the Lost Submarine; 1932
36. Tom Swift and His Television Detector, or, Trailing the Secret Plotters; 1933
37. Tom Swift and His Ocean Airport, or, Foiling the Haargolandiers; 1934
38. Tom Swift and His Planet Stone, or, Discovering the Secret of Another World; 1935

39. Tom Swift and His Giant Telescope (No sub-title); 1939
40. Tom Swift and His Magnetic Silencer (No sub-title); 1941

Tom Swift Jr.

| Title | Date |
|--|------|
| 1. Tom Swift and His Flying Lab; 1954 | |
| 2. Tom Swift and His Jetmarine; 1954 | |
| 3. Tom Swift and His Rocket Ship; 1954 | |
| 4. Tom Swift and His Giant Robot; 1954 | |
| 5. Tom Swift and His Atomic Earth Blaster; 1954 | |
| 6. Tom Swift and His Outpost in Space; 1955 | |
| 7. Tom Swift and His Diving Seacopter; 1956 | |
| 8. Tom Swift in the Caves of Nuclear Fire; 1956 | |
| 9. Tom Swift on the Phantom Satellite; 1956 | |
| 10. Tom Swift and His Ultrasonic Cycloplane; 1957 | |
| 11. Tom Swift and His Deep-Sea Hydrodome; 1958 | |
| 12. Tom Swift in the Race to the Moon; 1958 | |
| 13. Tom Swift and His Space Solartron; 1958 | |
| 14. Tom Swift and His Electronic Retroscope; 1959 | |
| 15. Tom Swift and His Spectromarine Selector; 1960 | |
| 16. Tom Swift and the Cosmic Astronauts; 1960 | |
| 17. Tom Swift and the Visitor from Planet X; 1961 | |
| 18. Tom Swift and the Electronic Hydrolung; 1961 | |
| 19. Tom Swift and His Triphibian Atomicar; 1962 | |
| 20. Tom Swift and His Megascop Space Prober; 1962 | |
| 21. Tom Swift and the Asteroid Pirates; 1963 | |
| 22. Tom Swift and His Repelatron Skyway; 1963 | |
| 23. Tom Swift and His Aquatomic Tracker; 1964 | |
| 24. Tom Swift and His 3-D Telejector; 1964 | |
| 25. Tom Swift and His Polar-Ray Dynasphere; 1965 | |
| 26. Tom Swift and His Sonic Boom Trap; 1965 | |
| 27. Tom Swift and His Subocean Geotron; 1966 | |
| 28. Tom Swift and the Mystery Comet; 1966 | |
| 29. Tom Swift and the Captive Planetoid; 1967 | |
| 30. Tom Swift and His G-Force Inverter; 1968 | |
| 31. Tom Swift and His Dyna-4 Capsule; 1969 | |
| 32. Tom Swift and His Cosmotron Express; 1970 | |
| 33. Tom Swift and the Galaxy Ghosts; 1971 | |

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2. Letter from Andrew E. Svenson to the author, October 25, 1963.
3. Interview with Harriet S. Adams, April 2, 1975.

NEWS NOTE

Charles Rothstein of 45 S. E. 2nd St., Miami, Fla. 33131 is looking for Dime Novels with a Florida locale. Can anyone quote him any?

WANTED

Adventure Magazine: Jan. 1911; New York Black Mask: Aug. 1929 and 1926 issues.

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MOVIES FEATURING REAL AND FICTIONAL CHARACTERS MADE FAMOUS BY DIME NOVELS

Compiled by Arthur N. Carter

#1 — Frank and Jesse James

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----------------|------------------|
| Adventures of Frank and Jesse James | 1948 | Steve Darrell | Clayton Moore |
| Jesse James Rides Again | 1947 | | Clayton Moore |
| James Boys of Missouri, The | 1950 | Robert Rice | Keith Richards |
| Bad Man's Territory | 1946 | Tom Tyler | Lawrence Tierney |
| Days of Jesse James, The | 1939 | Mike Worth | Roy Rogers |
| Fighting Man of the Plains, The | 1949 | Randolph Scott | Dale Robertson |
| Great Jesse James Raid, The | 1953 | | Willard Parker |
| Great Missouri Raid, The | 1950 | MacDonald Carey | Wendell Corey |
| Great Northfield Minnesota Raid | 1972 | Robert Duval | Cliff Robertson |
| I Shot Jesse James | 1949 | Tom Tyler | Reed Hadley |
| James Boys of Missouri, The | 1950 | Robert Bice | Keith Richards |
| Jesse James | 1939 | Henry Fonda | Tyronne Power |
| Jesse James | 1927 | James Pierce | Fred Thompson |
| Jesse James as an Outlaw | 1921 | | Jesse James, Jr. |
| Jesse James at Bay | 1941 | | Roy Rogers |
| Jesse James Rides Again | 1947 | | Clayton Moore |
| Jesse James Under the Black Flag | 1921 | | Jesse James, Jr. |
| Jesse James vs. the Daltons | 1954 | | Brett King |
| Jesse James' Women | 1954 | Jack Beutel | Red Barry |
| Kansas Raiders | 1950 | Richard Long | Audie Murphy |
| Return of Frank James, The | 1940 | Henry Fonda | |
| Return of Jesse James, The | 1950 | Reed Hadley | John Ireland |
| True Story of Jesse James, The | 1957 | Jeffrey Hunter | Robert Wagner |
| Young Jesse James | 1960 | | Willard Parker |

#2 — Wild Bill Hickok

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|----------------------|--|
| Across the Sierras | 1941 | Bill Elliott | |
| Badlands of Dakota | 1941 | Richard Dix | |
| Calamity Jane | 1953 | Howard Keel | |
| Deadwood '76 | 1971 | Robert Dix | |
| Great Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok | 1938 | Bill Elliott | |
| I Killed Wild Bill Hickok | 1956 | Tom Brown | |
| King of Dodge City | 1941 | Bill Elliott | |
| Last Frontier, The | 1926 | J. Farrell MacDonald | |
| Last Frontier, The | 1932 | Yakima Canutt | |
| North From the Lone Star | 1941 | Bill Elliott | |
| Plainsman, The | 1936 | Gary Cooper | |
| Plainsman, The | 1966 | Don Murray | |
| Pony Express, The | 1953 | Forrest Tucker | |
| Prairie Schooners | 1940 | Bill Elliott | |
| Return of Wild Bill Hickok | 1940 | Bill Elliott | |
| Roaring Frontiers | 1941 | Bill Elliott | |
| Seven Hours of Gunfire | 1964 | Adrian Hoven | |
| Son of the Renegade Wild Bill, Jr. | 1953 | Ewing Brown | |
| Trail of the Arrow | 1953 | Guy Madison | |
| Wild Bill Hickok | 1923 | William S. Hart | |
| Wild Bill Hickok Rides | 1942 | Bruce Cabot | |
| Wildcat of Tucson | 1940 | Bill Elliott | |

#3 — General George A. Custer

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|-----------------|
| Custer's Last Stand | 1936 | Rex Lease |
| General Custer at Little Big Horn | 1926 | John Beck |
| Great Sioux Massacre, The | 1965 | Phil Carey |
| Last Frontier, The | 1932 | William Desmond |
| Plainsman, The | 1936 | John Miljan |
| Plainsman, The | 1966 | Leslie Neilsen |
| They Died With Their Boots On | 1942 | Errol Flynn |
| Tonka | 1958 | Britt Lomond |
| Warpath | 1951 | James Millican |
| World Changes, The | 1933 | Clay Clement |
| Wyoming | 1940 | Paul Kelly |
| Wyoming | 1928 | Tim McCoy |

#4 — Buffalo Bill

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|
| Battling with Buffalo Bill | 1931 | Tom Tyler |
| Cody of the Pony Express | 1950 | Jack Mahoney |
| Riding With Buffalo Bill (Serial) | 1954 | Marshall Reed |
| Pony Express, The | 1925 | John Fox |
| Buffalo Bill | 1965 | Scott Brady |
| Buffalo Bill in Tomahawk Country | 1952 | Clayton Moore |
| Buffalo Bill on the U. P. Trail | 1926 | Roy Stewart |
| Last Frontier, The | 1929 | Jack Hoxie |
| Buffalo Bill Rides Again | 1947 | Richard Arlen |
| Fighting with Buffalo Bill | 1926 | Wallace MacDonald |
| Flaming Frontiers | 1938 | Johnny Mack Brown |
| Indians Are Coming, The | 1930 | Tim McCoy & Wallace MacDonald |
| In the Days of Buffalo Bill | 1922 | Not known |
| King of the Bullwhip | 1951 | Tex Cooper |
| Last Frontier, The | 1926 | Jack Hoxie |
| Law of the Golden West | 1949 | Monte Hale |
| Outlaw Express | 1938 | Carlyle Moore |
| Plainsman, The | 1936 | James Ellison |
| Plainsman, The | 1966 | Guy Stockwell |
| Pony Express, The | 1953 | Charlton Heston |
| Seven Hours of Gunfire | 1964 | Rick Van Nutter |
| Young Buffalo Bill | 1940 | Roy Rogers |
| World Changes, The | 1933 | Douglass Dumbrille |

#5 — Kit Carson

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------|
| Fighting with Kit Carson | 1933 | Johnny Mack Brown |
| Overland with Kit Carson (Serial) | 1939 | Bill Elliott |
| Fury at Red Gulch | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Kit Carson | 1940 | Jon Hall |
| Kit Carson Over the Great Divide | 1925 | Jack Mower |
| Kit Carson | 1928 | Fred Thompson |
| Law of the Six Gun | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Murango Story, The | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Painted Stallion, The | 1937 | Sammy McKim |
| Prince of Padua Hills, The | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Return of Trigger Dawson | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Riders of Capistrano | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Roaring Challenge, The | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Thunder over Inyo | 1955 | Bill Williams |
| Ticket to Mexico, A | 1955 | Bill Williams |

#6 — Calamity Jane

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Calamity Jane | 1953 | Doris Day |
| Calamity Jane and Sam Bass | 1949 | Yvonne DeCarlo |
| Caught | 1931 | Louise Dresser |
| Plainsman, The | 1936 | Jean Arthur |
| Plainsman, The | 1966 | Abby Dalton |
| Seven Hours of Gunfire | 1964 | Gloria Milland |
| Texan Meets Calamity Jane, The | 1950 | Evelyn Ankers |

#7 — Billy the Kid

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------|------------------|
| Billy the Kid | 1941 | Robert Taylor |
| Billy the Kid in Santa Fe | 1941 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid in Texas | 1940 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid Outlawed | 1940 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid Returns | 1938 | Roy Rogers |
| Billy the Kid's Fighting Pals | 1941 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid's Gun Justice | 1940 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid, Sheriff of Sage Valley | 1941 | Buster Crabbe |
| Billy the Kid vs. Dracula | 1966 | Harry Carey, Jr. |
| Billy the Kid Wanted | 1941 | Buster Crabbe |
| Billy the Kid's Range War | 1941 | Bob Steele |
| Billy the Kid's Roundup | 1941 | Buster Crabbe |
| Billy the Kid's Smoking Guns | 1942 | Buster Crabbe |
| Billy the Kid's Law and Order | 1941 | Buster Crabbe |
| Outlaw, The | 1943 | Jack Beutel |
| Blazing Frontier, The | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |
| Cattle Stampede | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |
| Facing Billy the Kid | 1962 | Jack Taylor |
| Fugitive of the Plains | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |
| I Shot Billy the Kid | 1950 | Red Barry |
| Kid From Texas, The | 1950 | Audie Murphy |
| Kid Rides Again, The | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |
| Law vs Billy the Kid | 1954 | Scott Brady |
| Left Handed Gun, The | 1958 | Paul Newman |
| Parson and the Outlaw, The | 1957 | Anthony Dexter |
| Renegade, The | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |
| Western Cyclone | 1943 | Buster Crabbe |

#8 — Daniel Boone

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Daniel Boone | 1936 | George O'Brien |
| Daniel Boone, Frontier Trail Rider | 1967 | Fess Parker |
| Daniel Boone Through the Wilderness | 1926 | Roy Stewart |
| Daniel Boone, Trail Blazer | 1956 | Bruce Bennett |
| Days of Daniel Boone, The | 1923 | Jack Mower |
| Return of Daniel Boone, The | 1941 | Bill Elliott |
| Young Daniel Boone | 1950 | David Bruce |

#9 — Davy Crockett

| | | |
|--|------|-------------------|
| Davy Crockett and the River Pirates | 1956 | Fess Parker |
| Davy Crockett, Indian Scout | 1950 | George Montgomery |
| Davy Crockett at the Fall of the Alamo | 1926 | Cullen Landis |
| Davy Crockett | 1916 | Dustin Farnum |
| Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier | 1955 | Fess Parker |
| Painted Stallion, The | 1937 | Jack Perrin |
| Son of Davy Crockett, The | 1942 | Bill Elliott |

#10 — Miscellaneous

AL JENNINGS

| | | |
|-------------------------|------|------------|
| Al Jennings of Oklahoma | 1951 | Dan Duryea |
|-------------------------|------|------------|

JACK SLADE

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|--------------|
| Jack Slade | 1953 | Mark Stevens |
| Return of Jack Slade, The | 1955 | John Ericson |

DEADWOOD DICK

| | | |
|------------------------|------|---------------|
| Deadwood Dick (Serial) | 1940 | Lane Chandler |
|------------------------|------|---------------|

GERONIMO

| | | |
|----------------------|------|--------------------|
| Son of Geronimo, The | 1952 | Jay Silverheels |
| Geronimo | 1939 | Chief Thundercloud |
| Geronimo's Revenge | 1964 | Pat Hogan |
| I Killed Geronimo | 1950 | Chief Thundercloud |
| Son of Geronimo | 1952 | Chief Yowlachie |
| Walk a Proud Land | 1956 | Jay Silverheels |

ANNIE OAKLEY

| | | |
|--------------------|------|------------------|
| Annie Oakley | 1935 | Barbara Stanwyck |
| Annie Get Your Gun | 1950 | Betty Hutton |

THE YOUNGERS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------|---------------|----------------|
| | | Cole | Jim |
| Bad Men of Missouri | 1941 | Dennis Morgan | Arthur Kennedy |
| Cole Younger, Gunfighter | 1958 | Frank Lovejoy | |
| Younger Brothers, The | 1941 | Wayne Morris | Bruce Bennett |

WYATT EARP, DOC HOLLIDAY

| | | | |
|---|------|----------------|----------------|
| | | Earp | Holliday |
| Cheyenne Autumn | 1964 | James Stewart | Arthur Kennedy |
| Doc | 1971 | Harris Yulin | Stacy Keach |
| Frontier Marshal | 1934 | George O'Brien | |
| Frontier Marshal | 1939 | Randolph Scott | Cesar Romero |
| Gunfight at the OK Corral, The | 1957 | Burt Lancaster | Kirk Douglas |
| Gunmen of the Rio Grande | 1965 | Guy Madison | |
| Hour of the Gun | 1967 | James Garner | Jason Robards |
| Law and Order | 1953 | Ronald Reagan | Preston Foster |
| Masterson of Kansas | 1954 | Bruce Cowling | James Griffith |
| My Darling Clementine | 1946 | Henry Fonda | Victor Mature |
| Tombstone, The Town Too Tough to Die | 1942 | Richard Dix | Kent Taylor |

BELLE STARR

| | | |
|------------------------|------|--------------|
| Belle Starr | 1941 | Gene Tierney |
| Belle Starr's Daughter | 1948 | Isabel Jewel |
| Montana Belle | 1952 | Jane Russell |

BLACK BART

| | | |
|------------|------|------------|
| Black Bart | 1948 | Dan Duryea |
|------------|------|------------|

BRIGHAM YOUNG

| | | |
|----------------------------|------|-------------|
| Brigham Young Frontiersman | 1940 | Dean Jagger |
|----------------------------|------|-------------|

COCHISE

| | | |
|--------------|------|---------------|
| Broken Arrow | 1950 | Jeff Chandler |
|--------------|------|---------------|

BUTCH CASSIDY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------|---------------|
| Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid | 1969 | Paul Newman |
| Maverick Queen, The | 1956 | Howard Petrie |
| Three Outlaws, The | 1946 | Neville Brand |

JIM BOWIE

| | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----------------|
| Comanche Territory | 1950 | MacDonald Carey |
| Iron Mistress, The | 1952 | Alan Ladd |
| Painted Stallion, The | 1937 | Wally Wales |

THE DALTONS

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | | Bob | Emmett |
| Daltons Ride Again, The | 1945 | Kent Taylor | Alan Curtis |
| Lucky Luke | 1971 | Cartoon | |
| Montana Belle | 1952 | Scott Brady | Ray Teal |
| When the Daltons Rode | 1940 | Broderick Crawford | Frank Albertson |

SAM BASS

| | | |
|--------------|------|--------------|
| Deadwood '76 | 1971 | Rex Marlowe |
| Outlaw Women | 1952 | Leonard Fenn |

SAM HOUSTON

| | | |
|------------------|------|--------------|
| First Texan, The | 1956 | Joel McCrea |
| Lone Star | 1952 | Moroni Olsen |

JOHNNY RINGO

| | | |
|-----------------|------|--------------|
| Gunfighter, The | 1950 | Gregory Peck |
|-----------------|------|--------------|

JOHNNY RENO

| | | |
|-------------|------|--------------|
| Johnny Reno | 1966 | Dana Andrews |
|-------------|------|--------------|

JOAQUIN MURIETA

| | | |
|-----------------|------|----------------|
| Joaquin Murieta | 1965 | Jeffrey Hunter |
|-----------------|------|----------------|

TOM DOOLEY

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|----------------|
| Legend of Tom Dooley, The | 1959 | Michael Landon |
|---------------------------|------|----------------|

JUDGE ROY BEAN

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------|----------------|
| The Life & Times of Judge Roy Bean | 1972 | Paul Newman |
| Time for Dying, A | 1969 | Victor Jory |
| Westerner, The | 1940 | Walter Brennan |

BAT MASTERSON

| | | |
|----------------------|------|-------------------|
| Masterston of Kansas | 1954 | George Montgomery |
| Trail Street | 1947 | Randolph Scott |
| Women of the Town | 1943 | Albert Dekker |

PANCHO VILLA

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Pancho Villa | 1972 | Chuck Connors |
| Treasure of Pancho Villa, The | 1955 | Gilbert Roland |
| Villa | 1956 | Cesar Romero |
| Viva Villa | 1934 | Wallace Beery |

QUANTRILL

| | | |
|---------------------|------|----------------|
| Quantrill's Raiders | 1958 | Steve Cochrane |
|---------------------|------|----------------|

JOHN BROWN

| | | |
|-----------------|------|----------------|
| Santa Fe Trail | 1940 | Raymond Massey |
| Seven Angry Men | 1955 | Raymond Massey |

JOHN SUTTER

| | | |
|---------------|------|---------------|
| Sutter's Gold | 1936 | Edward Arnold |
|---------------|------|---------------|

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

THAT NONPAREIL ALL-AMERICAN BOY REACHES AGE 80, by Bill Blackbeard. SMITHSONIAN, June 1976. A short misinformed article about Gilbert Patten and the Merriwell saga. I cannot understand how a magazine of SMITHSONIAN'S stature could publish such an article. Errors of fact abound. The illustrations of early issues of Tip Top Weekly are great and well worth obtaining the article.

WHO WAS HORATIO ALGER? Anonymous. Short article in DUN'S REVIEW, for July 1976. Though short, the writer makes a good case for reading or rereading Alger. Such literary figures as Ernest Hemingway, Carl Sandburg and F. Scott Fitzgerald were among his readers.

BOYCE OF OTTAWA, (Illinois), compiled by John F. Sullivan, a subscriber to the Roundup. A 32 page paper bound "book" giving a short biography of William D. Boyce, by Walter F. Conley. Mr. Boyce published The Chicago Ledger, Chicago World and Saturday Blade. These papers were more story papers than newspapers and had a nationwide circulation. Mr. Boyce was instrumental in organizing boy scouting in America. Price \$2.00. Send to John F. Sullivan, 1000 E. Center St., Ottawa, Ill. 61350.

BOY ALLIES, by Larry Siegel. PLAYBOY, June 1964. A superficial article about Burt's series about World War I.

MICKEY FINN Comic Column, Sunday papers of a month or two ago. Clipping omitted date. Uncle Phil cleans out the attic and burns up a bunch of Liberty Boys, Diamond Dicks and Nick Carters. He is stricken dumb when he reads an article about their value.—Sent in by Lou Kohrt.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. I have 5 Alger books published by "Value Books, Inc., Quincy 69, Mass." These books don't have any copyright dates or date of printing. Could any of the members tell me in which year these were printed or when they first appeared on the bookracks in stores. Louis Bodnar, Jr., 1502 Laurel Ave., Chesapeake, Va. 23325.

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- 369 Public Library of Cincinnati, 800 Vine St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
- 370 Gary Hoppenstand, 2014 Mackenzie Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43220
- 371 Book World, 2523 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46222

ADDRESS CHANGES

- 297 S. K. Winther, 14820 Bothell Way NE, Seattle, Wash. 98155
- 267 Alex T. Shaner, 386 Beckham Drive, San Jose, Calif. 95123
- 168 Floyd I. Bailey, 4808 E. Lancaster, Apt. 103, Ft. Worth, Texas
- 291 Jack Bales, 1214 West College Ave., Jacksonville, Ill. 62650
- 210 David Harris, Kings Court, Mohegan Lake, N. Y. 10547

A Checklist Of Robert M. De Witt Publications

By Edward T. LeBlanc

From the late 1850's to the 1870's Robert M. DeWitt published a number of "Dime Novel" series at 25c each. These were mostly pirated from English Penny Dreadfuls, but many were original stories of New York City life as well as other romances of the day. DeWitt entered the true dime novel field with two series, DeWitt's Ten Cent Romances and Champion Novels. In addition he published music sheets, song books, joke books, plays, handbooks of all kinds and a variety of self-help books. The earliest publications were printed with yellow covers without reference to series and were priced at 25c each. The earliest imprint shows "Robert M. DeWitt (Successor to DeWitt and Davenport) 33 Rose St. New York, N. Y.". Later the parenthetical phrase was dropped. As more titles were added, DeWitt assigned them to numbered series. In the 1860's the DeWitt publications brightened into colored pictorial covers on orange paper. In the late 1870's the company name was changed to Clinton M. DeWitt. The check list which follows attempts to be complete but it is possible that a stray series or two were missed. Your editor will be glad to receive additions or corrections to the list.

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| DeWitt's Black Bess Series | 2 |
| DeWitt's Blueskin Series | 2 |
| DeWitt's Cheap Edition of Marryat's Novels | 17 |
| DeWitt's Choice Fiction | 30 |
| DeWitt's Claude Duval Series | 28 |
| DeWitt's Elocutionary Series | 4 |
| DeWitt's Ethiopian and Comic Drama | 143 |
| DeWitt's Good Book Series | 15 |
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| DeWitt's Handsome Jack Series | 9 |
| DeWitt's Jonathan Wild Series | 11 |
| DeWitt's Model Library | 2? |
| DeWitt's Musical Album Series | 10 |
| DeWitt's Nightshade Series | 9 |
| DeWitt's Popular Song and Joke Books | 238 |
| DeWitt's Romances | 8 |
| DeWitt's School Dialogues | 6 |
| DeWitt's School Speakers | 6 |
| DeWitt's Stories of New York Life | 19 |
| DeWitt's Stories of the Sea | 16 |
| DeWitt's Ten Cent Romances | 117 |
| DeWitt's Twenty-Five Cent Novels | 53 |
| F. W. Robinson Series | 14 |
| G. W. M. Reynolds' Novels | 18 |
| Miss Braddon Series | 7 |
| Pierce Egan's Stories | 16 |
| Red Wolf Series | 8 |

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